

STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS TOWARDS THE USE OF SCHOOLGY IN PRONUNCIATION CLASS

THESIS

Submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Sarjana Pendidikan.



Maria Intan Permata
112012052

ENGLISH LANGUAGE EDUCATION PROGRAM
FACULTY OF LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE
SATYA WACANA CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY
SALATIGA
2016



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Nama : Maria Intan Permata
NIM : 112012052 Email : 112012052@student.uksw.edu
Fakultas : Bahasa dan Sastra Program Studi : Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris
Judul tugas akhir : Students' Perception Toward The Use of Schoology in Pronunciation Class
Pembimbing : 1. Dian Toar Y.G. Sumakul, MA
2. Frances Lorraine Sinanu, S.Pd

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Nama : Maria Intan Permata
NIM : 112012052 Email : 112012052@student.uksw.edu
Fakultas : Bahasa dan Sastra Program Studi : Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris
Judul tugas akhir : Students' Perception towards the Use of Scholology in Pronunciation Class

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Tanda tangan & nama terang pembimbing II

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Frances Lorraine Sinanu, S.Pd

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Introduction

Le'ger (2009, p: 158) stated that, "Learners may also have different learning goals and expectations that may affect their willingness to participate in oral activities." This suggested that how students see or perceive something may not be seen as something trivial after all. Their perception towards the activities held in the classroom activities may affect the whole teaching and learning process. Thus knowing the students' perception is a crucial matter in order to create a successful teaching and learning process.

Technology has growth quite significant since the last decade. Something which was expensive and hard to get is now cheaper and easier to get. In other words, technology affects almost every aspects of people's life. Educational area is also one of the areas exposed with technology influence. By using technology, a lot of information can be obtained easily (Lorenzo, Dziuban, 2006:2). It is not only information but it may also assist students in classroom learning process. A lot of methods and approaches are designed in favor of technology. In classroom activities, types of applications such as Schoology and Edmodo are usually being used. These applications help providing material outside the classroom and assisting students in following the classroom activity. This kind of activity will give a new way to communicate for the students (Manning, Brooks, Crotteau, Diedrich, Moser, Zwiefelhofer, 2011).

Teachers might think that some approaches using technology would be better for the students based on a study or personal experiences, yet how students' see or perceive an approach is also crucial. Therefore, this study was aimed at knowing students' perceptions towards the use of Schoology in a Pronunciation Class are. This study was eager to know how students actually see Schoology in their classroom; whether it would as a useful aid, just a hindrance, or something that would not really have any effect towards their L2 learning

process, especially in Pronunciation Class. The theory from Chapelle (2001) regarding the 6 criteria of CALL would be used as the base of the discussion.

The result of the study could become the key for another method in assisting students in improving their English skills as the use of Schoology itself is quite rare in is still a new experiment. Therefore by knowing students' perception toward this method, the advantages and disadvantages of the method can be seen and later on be evaluated for a better understanding regarding Schoology and students' skill performance.

Literature Review

Defining Perception

Perception has always hold a big part in determining lots of things. For instance, a study regarding corporate social responsibility (Wong, Long, Elankumaran, 2010) actually put Bussiness students' perception as their participant and think that their perception towards it may affect a bigger scale in reducing social conflict. Seeing how important perception is moreover students' perception as the new generation, we should not overlooked students' perception. Similar base would also be used in this study as Le'ger (2009)'s statement regarding students' learning goals and expectations. How students see things are different one student to the others, these perceptions affect their way of thinking and attitude in an oral activity. Therefore, if students' perception does not put into account, their willingness to participate in oral activities could not be guaranteed.

Technology in Education

Seeing how technology had spread in almost every part of life, some people have applied technology as a source of information (Lorenzo, Dziuban, 2006:2), and some of them applied technology as way to eliminate the distance between teachers and students (Okur, 2011).

There were so many choices provided by technology. Students could also do lots of things by using technology to improve their English skills. Educators were particularly interested in technology's interactive capabilities, such as providing immediate feedback and increasing learner autonomy in addition to the capability of simulating real-world situations via audio, video, and graphics (Liu, Moore, Graham, Lee, 2000). These interactive medias provided by technology surely helps the students' in following the teaching and learning process. For instance, if in class we could only repeat the material once, by using technology, we could upload the file and let the students download and take a look at the material anytime and anywhere.

In line with the statement stated earlier, we can also refer to the 6 criteria of CALL from Chapelle (2001). They are language learning potential, learner fit, meaning focus, authenticity, positive impact, and practicality. Language learning potential talks about the chances that Schoology created in order to help students in their teaching and learning process. Learner fit on the other hands talks about how CALL able to assist students' different learning style. Meaning focus is talking about how students' language ability is measure through the usage of language in a discussion and not about the structure of the language. For example is when a certain task is given in order to discuss something regarding the topic, the task could be in the form of reflective note. Authenticity can be seen from the material being used in the tasks and assignments. Authentic materials are collected from the students' daily life and mostly about the students. What goes beyond the language learning is called the positive impact of CALL. Lastly is practicality which is mostly talking about feasibility of CALL.

While Schoology itself is an online platform that marries social media and the principles of an electronic classroom management system and looks just like Facebook (Zohr, 2012). In some sense therefore, Schoology worked similarly with Facebook but the focus is

more on the educational purposes. Schoology provided spaces to create assignments, events, tests, quizzes, grade book, and attendance. Similar to Zohr (2012), Putri, Jampel and Suartama (2014), stated a similar opinion towards Schoology as an online platform which offers a learning process similar to a classroom setting activities and looks like Facebook.

“Schoology offers the possibilities of utilizing this collaboration and learning tool to customize learning for each student” (Sicat, 2015 p: 162). Therefore each and every students would have the same amount of time to be assisted. Whether it was inside the classroom setting or outside the classroom setting.

Students' Perception and Technology

In classroom setting, there were several points of views or perceptions that would be discussed. In this research however, the researcher would discussed about students' perception in the classroom setting. Students' perception in this area was important, since how students saw thing would affect their attitude towards the class activities, moreover in oral activities, this definitions is close to those of Lin, Huifen, Fang, Yueh-chiu (2010) who is proposing an idea that student's input regarding how they perceive an innovative technology in their learning process is highly valued prior to implementation of any instructional intervention. Therefore, we should not overlook the students' perceptions, but highly considered it as an important factor in determining activities which were going to be implemented in classroom, moreover regarding technology in classroom activity.

For instance, Suki and Suki (2011) conduct a research regarding students' perception toward the usage of mobile devices for learning, in which result in several conclusions, yet, what this research wants to highlight is how students can have a skeptical opinion on the usage of mobile devices in improving their knowledge. Some of the students stated that it didn't help them at all and the other students said that there are lots more effective devices to use rather than mobile devices. Teachers might think that one method or approach is

appropriate in the classroom context yet, if the method or approach failed in fulfilling the students' goal and expectation, that particular approach or method might become a double-edge sword in the end.

Similar to the statement from Suki and Suki (2011), in the data found by Lin, Huifen, Fang, and Yueh-chiu (2010), there is a statement that said, "We have too much homework to do and it's time consuming to type and then wait, especially my partner has a very slow computer and he types very slowly. We only want to meet the minimum requirement of this assignment and then do something else." This result proved that even though the purpose of the task was to assist students in creating opportunity to talk and actually have conversation in English with their friends, it did not come close to what they expected. Therefore, their lack in interest was seen and actually affecting their performance and participation in classroom activities.

Thus, making the students comfortable or shifting the class activities into what the students' expected are one of the best ways to make the students participate in the classroom activities. Here is where the students' perceptions should be taken into account in order to create a creative and engaging lesson plan using technology for classroom activities.

The Study

Research Question

What are the students from English Department of Faculty of Language and Literature of Satya Wacana Christian University's perceptions towards the use of Schoology in their Pronunciation Class?

Context

This research was a descriptive study. It explored students' perception toward the use of Schoology in improving their pronunciation. There were 2 meetings per week in total of 14 meetings for this pronunciation course and all of the students in these classes used Schoology

as a media of communication outside the class. Students would be able to access additional information by using Schoology. Schoology provided space for sharing and exchanging information for students and teachers. Schoology could be accessed from anywhere and anytime as long as there was an internet connection.

Participant

Participants of this research were from a total of 4 classes, 120 students, which were Pronunciation Classes. 8% of the total participants, which were 10 students, were interviewed using a convenient sampling. Students were all Indonesians and were still in their first year of university. They were freshmen of Faculty of Language and Literature of Satya Wacana Christian University year 2015.

Instrument of Data Collection

To collect the data that was used in this research regarding students' perceptions toward the use of Schoology in Pronunciation Class, the researcher used a set of interview questions which was adapted from a study discussing online learning and students' perception towards it (Song, Singleton, Hill, Koh, 2004). The set of the interview questions had been revised appropriately based on the purpose of the research. The set of questions consists of 6 main questions and several follow up questions. This was a semi-structured interview. Along with the questions regarding students' perception, students' characteristic had also been included (e.g., demographics, enrollment status, the place they usually accessed the Internet for the online course). The set of question used in the interview can be seen in Appendix.

Data Collection Procedure

10 students from the total of 120 students were picked and these students were interviewed in order to know how students actually perceive Schoology and whether or not it was beneficial in improving their pronunciation's skill. The length of each interview session

was around 15 to 20 minutes depending on the students' reactions and answers toward the set of questions given by the researcher.

Data Analysis Procedure

After collecting the data from the interview, the data were transcribed and analyzed thoroughly using several theories regarding students' perception and technology. The theory on CALL used as the basis of the discussion was Chapelle (2001) that talks about the 6 criteria of CALL. The result would also be discussed further to find out the implication, limitation, and further study of the research.

Finding

The data of the research was collected using interview. The data found then were categorized using Chapelle's 6 criteria' of CALL. However, out of the 6 criteria only 5 were found in the data. The table below summarized the data found from the interview session.

Criteria of CALL	Number of appearance
Language learning Potential	7
Learners fit	12
Authenticity	1
Positive impact	6
Practicality	9

Table 1. Summarization of the interview data

Based from the interview result, we could see that the percentage of learners fit comes out 12 times in the data. It could be seen that mostly the participants thought that the usage of Schoology in their Pronunciation Class as a positive input. It is because Schoology able to assist their learning differences much better since it provides varieties of activities and tasks.

Language Learning Potential

Chapelle (2001) stated that language learning potential means the chances presented in order to assist the students in learning form of the language. In this case, the main point was how many possibilities can CALL makes for the students to learn the language. In here the chances that were counted was not simply “an opportunity for language use” but “a language learning activity”, which was usually being distinguished with the use of assignment or task given by the teacher.

Based from the interview result, several evidences of language learning potential could be found. For example, Participant 1 said that,

“Since we can record our pronunciation which then will be scored by the lecturer, we are able to improve our pronunciation skill.”

From the statement, it could be seen that Schoology was able to give chances for the participants to improve their pronunciation skill by recording their own voice. It gave the students exposures to the language they are learning. The students were also able to get more chances to use English language outside the classroom.

Another example of language learning potential also comes from Participant 2,

“Schoology sometimes is used to upload material.”

The uploaded material was also another thing which helped the students to do their own individual learning process. The already provided material, which could be accessed anytime and anywhere, gave the students their own freedom to develop their language learning activity.

Looking at the result of the interview and discussion, we could conclude that by using Schoology, students were given several chances and benefits (Beatty, 2003) in order to improve their pronunciation skill. Those benefits ranged from material up to the task and

assignment given by the lecturer as class's activities. Those chances presented by Schoology were, indeed, opening new ways for the students to get exposed to their language learning process. Meanwhile, the provided materials were range from the sound recording up to video recording. These all were provided in other to get the students to be more engaged with their teaching and learning process.

Learner Fit

Based from Chapelle (2001), "learner fit takes into account the individual differences in linguistic ability level and non-linguistic ability characteristics." Agreeing to the statement, Lujan and Dicarlo (2006) also stated that there is a big difference between one student and the other student in term of learning ability. In line with the theory mentioned earlier Dede (2004) mentioned how university students already have different learning preference regarding their liking to internet-based instructional media. Which is why, the appropriate input from teacher or lecturer should be highly considered in other to fit in with the students' characteristics and learning ability for there was certainly a big gap between students in their language learning.

Based from the interview result, Schoology could be seen to assist the difference in students' learning ability. Participant 3 in the interview session stated that,

"By using Schoology, we can repeat the same word over and over until we got how to pronounce the word. I think it is more efficient then asking the lecturer over and over."

Thus, as the transcript revealed that by using Schoology, students were able to explore their own learning style, the example showed that the participants prefer to use Schoology in other to improve their pronunciation skill rather than asking to their lecturer. It could also be seen that Schoology was able to give the students freedom to choose their own drilling method and material in other to improve their pronunciation skill. The usage of Schoology as their media

of learning increased the students learning method in class and outside class. Inside the classroom, students were able to ask the lecturer and friends, outside the classroom, students were able to repeat the words using the feature in Schoology.

Some other opinions were also stated in the interview regarding learners fit. Participant 4 for instance said that,

“We also use Schoology as a media to get in touch with our lecturer and friends... It is like posting in the Facebook wall of the teacher.”

Therefore, the usage of Schoology actually gave lots of opportunity for students to communicate and choose their own time and to get in touch with their peer and lecturer. It helped them in getting in touch with one and another.

Thus, Schoology was able to give another method which was based on the students' preferences which was related to their strategy and method in learning process (Schmeck, 2013) and able to assist students' activities in regards of improving students' pronunciation skill.

As learner fit surrounded the talks regarding whether or not a technology able to aid the students' preference in language learning method, it could be said that Schoology succeeded in that circumstance as the data showed how students able to get in touch with their lecturer and friends anywhere and anytime they wanted. The students could also reflect to their learning process as they could utilize the material provided by Schoology as they pleased.

Authenticity

Using the students' real life situation (Akbari, 2008) or the usage of outside theme which interest the learner (Chapelle, 2001) are what is known as authenticity. Authenticity then talked about the usage of real-life material or material which is closely related to the

students' daily activities. Authenticity was also closely related to students' motivation on their language learning process (Berardo, 2006).

The encrypt revealed a proof that Schoology offers authenticity materials to the students, Participant 9 said that,

“Tasks which are given through Schoology are varied. One of the tasks is that we have to record our own dialogue.”

Using their own dialogue, which is based on their own daily life, the students had to record the dialogue that then would be send through Schoology, proved that some of the materials usage for the tasks in Schoology, were based on authentic materials. As the use of authentic material were “highly motivating” (Berardo, 2006, p: 60), or in some other meaning able to affect the students motivation in language learning potential

Khaniya (2006) stated that authentic materials can become a bridge between students and their professional life. Hence, the usage of authentic materials in a classroom setting was highly considered. When authentic materials in Schoology were carefully used by the lecturer and students, it could become beneficial to the students learning process.

Positive Impact

Positive impact was about the effect beyond the language learning itself (Chapelle, 2001). It was talking about how the participants viewed the process of learning using CALL. It was whether the tasks or assignments given gave any positive impact towards students' motivation in learning. The students' perception was highly considered in order to determine this one characteristic of CALL.

The result of the interview showed how Schoology gives a positive impact toward the participants in their learning process. For instance, Participant 5 stated that,

“I also feel that by using Schoology I got braver and doesn't_[sic] feel shy because it is a social media and not face-to-face.”

Generally speaking, there were two kinds of students. They were introvert and extrovert students. As we already know, extrovert students are mostly open-minded and comfortable with the society (Zafar, Meenakshi, 2011) and introvert students are mostly “reluctant in interacting and sharing what she/he has in her/his mind with others” (Abali, 2006, p: 2).

Talking about extrovert students and speaking or pronunciation skill, there would not be much problem as they were more open and brave in the society, but talking about introvert students, even in our interview session, we found several students who admitted their shyness in interacting and practicing in class. Yet, Schoology was able to give a positive impact for the students by giving them chances to be actively participating in the class activities through Schoology. Therefore, students could be easily motivated in teaching and learning process (Genc Ilter, 2009).

Another statement regarding Schoology's positive impact came from Participant 6 stated,

“Schoology makes me responsible. Since all the materials are uploaded already, it is our own awareness that left behind. The worst case if we do not do the assignments is that we might not get our score.”

Based on the statement, it could be concluded that the use of technology could help students to become more responsible in their learning process (Chen, Lou, Luo, 2001). Since Schoology had already given the material and time needed by the students, the thing left for the students was elaborating on the already existing facilities. Therefore, as the participant mentioned about being responsible, they were given the freedom to choose whether they would develop the learning material or not as the students had already known the advantages

and disadvantages of their own actions. Thus, it could be said that Schoology actually give freedom and motivation to the participants to learn.

In line with Chen, Lou, and Luo (2001), as stated in Pintrich and Zusho (2007), students' academic learning process happened not only inside the classroom but also outside the classroom activity. The participants were free to learn and free to use the material provided by the Schoology yet, it is their own motivation and passion that determine their result. Seeing as the students actually felt motivated in learning as they used Schoology in their learning process, the use of Schoology in the students' Pronunciation Class could be seen in a positive attitude as per emerging a responsible attitude out of the students is a quite tricky task to do for the lecturer and educator.

Practicality

Practicality talks about the efficiency of implementing CALL in a particular classroom setting (Chapelle, 2001). How easy or flexible it is for the teacher or the student to use a specific CALL in their classroom is what being called as practicality. Practicality is closely related to tasks given or the activities in order to support the teaching and learning process.

Schoology's practicality was shown in the interview result as there were lots of evidences from the participants regarding practicality. Participant 7 mentioned how pleased they are when using Schoology as follows,

"It is easy to use and very useful. I don't have any complain about Schoology."

Agreeing to the statement regarding Schoology's flexibility and efficiency, Participant 8 said that,

“As long as there is laptop or any other gadget and internet connection, we can access the Schoology and do our homework.”

Schoology then as a form of M-learning, based on the result of the interview, was able to provide what Sarrab, SI-Shihi, and Manthari (2015) stated as flexible, easily access and always on learning mechanism. Flexible as Schoology could be accessed anywhere and anytime as the students pleased. Schoology was also easily accessed by using laptop, tab, cell phone, or any other gadget available at the moment. As Schoology provided learning environment for the students, it is always on learning mechanism as it aided the students' language learning process.

Discussion

From the result of the interview, it could be seen that Schoology offers range of advantages for students in other to improve their pronunciation skill. It started from the materials that were provided up to the flexibility that Schoology offers for the students. Taking into accounts is that Schoology also able to assist students' learning differences in a sense that the range of tasks or assignments given through the Schoology, was able to help decreasing students' gap in learning style. Communication between student-lecturer and student-student is being assisted too (Sarrab, SI-Shihi, Manthari, 2015) by using Schoology. Schoology in one way or another is coming up close to Chapelle (2001) 6 criteria of CALL in this Pronunciation Class.

From the participants' point of view, Schoology was seen as some helpful assistant that help them in their learning process. The participants were quite pleased up to the point that one of the participant actually regretted Schoology hadn't been used in one of their recent classes. The participants said that though it may not be significant, Schoology contributed in their learning and process. They admitted that without Schoology, there would be lots of hassle for them in completing the task given. Thus it could be concluded that,

Schoology able to help teachers in the teaching and learning process, as Schoology was closely relate to what teachers want to teach and what students expected to be taught (Manning, Brooks, Crotteau, Diedrich, Moser, Zwiefelhofer, 2011), without putting additional pressure to the students.

Moreover, seeing the result of the discussion, majority of the students actually fancied the use of technology, in this case Schoology, in their classroom activity. The students admitted that at first they are quite skeptical of Schoology, since it was something new for them, they had never used Schoology before, but as they learn and understand, most of them agreed that Schoology had lots of benefits for their language learning process.

Thus, it was known already that Schoology benefitted the teaching and learning process, now here is when the teacher's role should enter. With the usage of Schoology in classroom activities, teachers' attention and constant control over the activities are exceptionally needed (Bygate, Skehan, Swain, 2013). It is to prevent external and internal problems which may occur during the activities. External problems are talking about the problem outside the Schoology and internal problems are talking about problem inside the Schoology. As most of the students may not be accustomed with Schoology in their classroom, teacher should act as the facilitator and bridge between the students and Schoology. Clear explanation and extra attention to small details may be a great start to using Schoology in classroom. Teachers' flexibility is also another thing that I would like to point out since we are dealing with a sensitive case.

Conclusion

The study aimed to know the students' perceptions towards the use of Schoology in their Pronunciation Class. For this purpose, the data were collected using a set of interview

questions. 10 students taking the Pronunciation Class were interviewed around 15 to 20 minutes. The data collected were then transcribed and analyzed using the existing theories.

Based on the data collected, it could be seen that the result of the interview is in line with the 6 criteria of Chapelle (2001). Out of 6 criteria purposed by Chapelle, 5 criteria were found in the data collected. They are language learning potential, learner fit, authenticity, positive impact, and practicality. Therefore, by relating the theory and the data found, we can conclude that the students had a positive attitude towards the use of Schoology in their Pronunciation Class. This study then would like to suggest the teachers, who are going to use Schoology in their classroom activities, to take more cautious steps and extensive care as the learning process using Schoology is something new for the students, there could be many misunderstanding between the teacher and students. This small misunderstanding could create an ineffective teaching and learning process which therefore would prevent the full potential of Schoology in classroom activities. This suggestion is in line with a research conducted by Herron, York, Cole, and Linden (1998 as cited in Lin, 2007) regarding declarative and advance organizers in aiding students listening comprehension using video. Accordingly, by looking at the collected data and existing theory, teachers have to take the role as a bridge and a facilitator in a technology-based classroom activity.

Looking at our daily life nowadays, we might take a look at what we could do as future teacher or teacher in this century. Technology had conquered almost all part of the educational system. Almost all activities could be done with technology. Therefore future teacher and teacher could not fall behind with the increasing use of technology. Rather than seeing it as a bad thing, utilizing technology in classroom activities can be a good try.

However, as this study was only concerning over students of Faculty of Language and Literature in Satya Wacana Christian University's perception towards the use of Schoology in

their Pronunciation Class, further study such as knowing teacher's perception on this case, is also needed in order to get a more reliable result to evaluate the use of Schoology in the Pronunciation Class.

Acknowledgment

First thing first, I would like to offer my upmost thanks to the one and only boyfriend, who had accompany me throughout my journey in making this thesis, Jesus Christ. Without His love and care, this thesis would not even exist.

Secondly, to My Father which always gave me strength and entertained me in the middle of the night when I was stuck and did not know what to write anymore and My Mother which always gave me encouragement and pray I would like to say how much I that meant to me and how much I love them. Thank you so much for your patience and love or me, there is nothing I could do to return all your kindness. My brother, Ucup, thank you for your 'rare food delivery', I know that you kind of felt pity to your sister which already looked like a zombie inside the room.

The third one, I would like to offer my gratitude to my one and only supervisor, Mr. Toar. You are always fun to be with and I think, if my supervisor is not you, I did not think I could finish my thesis without being pressure and all. Though, I did not know how other supervisors are, I still think that you are one of the best lecturer I know. In this occasion, I would also say thank you to my second reader, Ma'am Frances, which helped me revising my thesis.

I would also like to say thank you to my friends that always entertain me during the time I made this thesis, Yubi, Rahma, Lia, Bram, Happy, Nanda, Nanik, and Hyung. Without you guys, my life would be kind of boring. My gratitude is also addressed to Winda who had

helped me creating the page break (without you, I would have spent the whole day creating that). Last but not least is to all of my friends whom I cannot mention, and my participants.



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